

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the substitute amendment to Calendar No. 202, H.R. 927, an act to seek international sanctions against the Castro government.

Bob Dole, Jesse Helms, Bob Smith, Bill Frist, John Ashcroft, Jim Inhofe, Paul D. Coverdell, Spencer Abraham, Larry E. Craig, Trent Lott, Rod Grams, Frank H. Murkowski, Fred Thompson, Mike DeWine, Hank Brown, Chuck Grassley.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I will just say a word and then turn it over to the distinguished Senator of the committee, Senator HELMS. Senator PELL is here, Senator DODD is here, and they will continue the debate.

I want to say just as I leave—not leave, but leave the floor, that is, not leave the Senate—I am not certain what the administration policy is toward Cuba. President Clinton says he wants to tighten the embargo on Castro's Cuba, and then the White House issues veto threats on the legislation which toughens sanctions. President Clinton says he wants to increase pressure on Castro, and then he cuts a secret deal with him and changes the U.S. embargo and allows more money to flow to Castro.

But whatever the administration's policy is, the Senate will have a chance to speak on this legislation. We will have to speak for the Cuban people who have been muzzled so long by Castro's tyranny.

The choice in this legislation is simple: Do you want to increase pressure on the last dictatorship in the hemisphere, or let Castro off the hook.

Many in the United States actually want to end the embargo, and in the coming debate, they will argue about property rights, legal interpretations, free trade, about many things. But let there be no mistake, passing this bill is about supporting democratic change in Cuba and sending Fidel Castro the way of all other dictators of Latin America.

Let me also indicate that they have had a very good debate on the House floor on this similar bill, the Burton bill, the Burton-Torricelli bill on the House side. Sixty-seven Democrats had strong bipartisan support on the measure. It passed with strong bipartisan support. I know we have bipartisan support here. I hope we will have enough support that we can obtain the 60 votes on cloture, pass this bill, go on to conference and send it to the President. I also hope that we do not grant a visa, of course, to Castro to visit the United Nations any time in the future. I assume that may be in the works.

This is an important bill, an important debate. It is about the last dictator in this hemisphere. I hope that we will tighten sanctions, which is precisely what the bill sponsored by Senator HELMS, myself, and others does. There are a number of cosponsors, as the RECORD will reflect, Republicans and Democrats alike, cosponsoring this bill.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I indicate to my colleagues that there will be no more votes today. There is an agreement that there will be no amendments offered today. There will be lengthy discussions on both sides, as I understand it. So there will not be any votes. I give my colleagues advance notice of that.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may be recognized for 1 minute as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MISS AMERICA SHAWNTEL
SMITH'S POSITION ON SCHOOL-
TO-WORK

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, we were very proud to present to all of America today Miss America, Shawntel Smith. She has requested that I submit her statement, which she made today on the lawn of the Capitol, for the RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent at this time to have printed in the RECORD the statement by the new Miss America, and former Miss Oklahoma, Shawntel Smith.

There being no objection, the statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SCHOOL-TO-WORK: REINVENTING AMERICA'S
WORK FORCE

(Platform Statement of Shawntel Smith,
Miss America 1996)

As global communications and technological propel us toward the 21st century, we Americans are falling further and further behind. Everyday, millions of men and women wake up and go to work in jobs that fall short of their American dream, while in some places as many as 50% of our high school students simply drop out. Because many American workers and students are neither motivated nor clear about their economic future, they flounder.

As a nation, our competitive positions remains stagnant. Lagging productivity growth rates, rising unemployment and the absence of a skilled work force widen the gap between America and its competitors. American business and industry struggle to fill

the jobs that exist because candidates lack the skills and education to make the grade.

America's classrooms and America's workplace today are out of sync. We're simply not preparing our nation's youth for the high skill, high wage jobs of a technology-based economy, and for that we all suffer. Students who cannot find the relevance in what they're learning, adults who cannot replace lost jobs, educators who cannot motivate their students, and employers who cannot compete.

As Miss America and as a student, I advocate school-to-work solutions that prepare today's students for tomorrow's workplace, providing them with appropriate and clearly marked paths from school to work or to continuing education. In doing so, I will encourage partnerships among the educators, employers, employee groups, students, parents, government and community leaders that spawn local school-to-work initiatives. Such initiatives not only offer "first chance" opportunities to students entering the work force but "second chance" opportunities to the unemployed and underemployed as well.

My very first priority will be to generate awareness for the school-to-work philosophy, reaching out to those who deserve its benefits but as yet are unaware of its existence. As I travel this country, I will seek out effective partnerships between educators, employers and students, sharing their stories with those who care to hear. I will speak with a sense of urgency because, in this case, there is no time to spare.

Among educators, I will encourage them to provide high-standards academic and relevant education that prepares all students for college, vocational or technical training, career education or immediate entry into the work force. I will ask them to take responsibility for ensuring that America's students be ready to succeed in a high-technology workplace.

Among employers, I will urge them to ensure the future competitiveness of America by taking an active role in the development of educational curricula and by providing work-based learning opportunities for all students. I will also ask them to examine the investments they make in human capital and to provide job training and retraining to all levels within the workplace.

Among students, I will motivate them to discover their personal paths from the classroom to the workplace, showing them that the American Dream is still attainable. I will challenge them to stay in school, so they can take from the education process what they'll need to succeed in the world of work, and I will help them understand that the process of lifelong learning is the key to their productivity and happiness.

From America's classrooms to its tool rooms to its board rooms, I will serve as a catalyst for change by shining the Miss America spotlight on and bringing a forceful voice to this new movement, a movement which seeks to put all Americans to work and makes our country strong and competitive once more.

These pledges I make today, the 11th day of October, 1995.

CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC
SOLIDARITY [LIBERTAD] ACT OF
1995

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, some of us have been waiting quite a while for the pending legislation, known generally as the Helms-Burton bill. But as the distinguished majority leader has

just said, the pending bill has wide support in both parties and in both Houses of Congress.

The water was muddied a bit last week by President Clinton, but I will say for the President that, confusing as his actions are and have been with respect to Cuba, he did, in my judgment, reemphasize last week that the embargo against Fidel Castro's Communist regime in Cuba is still an absolute necessity. On that, I certainly agree with the President.

I think most Americans, and certainly those who are still prisoners in Cuba and those who fled Cuba and are now in exile, unanimously agree that the embargo against Fidel Castro must be continued.

For 36 years—and this covers a period when eight American Presidents were in the Oval Office—the U.S. policy of isolating Castro has been consistently bipartisan. And I do hope that consideration of this bill today, and for however long it takes beyond today, will continue to be bipartisan. It is called the Libertad bill, and it builds on and enhances that embargo policy, which I hope, as I say, will continue to be bipartisan.

Why? That is a rhetorical question, and everybody knows the answer to it. Certainly, every Senator is old enough to remember Fidel Castro's entry into Cuba. I remember Herbert Mathews of the New York Times—that newspaper that prints "all the news that is fit to print," as they say in boastful declarations—Mr. Mathews sent dispatch after dispatch to the New York Times from Havana reminding one and all that Fidel Castro was just a nice, little agrarian reformer. And then there was Edward R. Murrow, who broadcast nightly that Fidel Castro was a peace-loving agrarian reformer.

That is when Fidel Castro was in the boondocks and Mathews and Edward R. Murrow went out and sat at Castro's knee and trumpeted his propaganda via CBS and the New York Times.

Well, when Mr. Castro got to Havana, the bloodletting began. And anybody who is in this Senate is certainly old enough to remember what happened. There was tyranny throughout Cuba. Mr. Castro, first of all, took up all of the guns from his political enemies; and he lined up a great many of those political enemies before firing squads. As for the declarations by Herbert Mathews of the New York Times and Edward R. Murrow that Fidel Castro was not a Communist, the first declaration that Mr. Castro made when he became the premier of Cuba was, "I am a Communist, I have always been a Communist, and I will always be a Communist."

So Fidel Castro became known worldwide as a cruel, bloody tyrant, whose regime engaged in rampant human rights abuses, drug smuggling, arms trafficking, and terrorism. Mr. Castro sits atop a structure that regularly and routinely abuses, detains, tortures, and executes its citizens. He is a self-de-

clared, committed Communist who stands against every fundamental principle that the American people value.

In all—I saw some statistics on this the other day, Mr. President—more than 10,000 Cubans have been killed by Castro and his regime, with tens of thousands more having fled their homeland to escape his tyranny. Currently, at least a thousand Cubans are, this very day, being held as political prisoners in Castro's jails. Yet, the United States liberal community, including this Senate, so desperately desires good news out of Cuba so that they can cast Castro in some favorable light that they will seize on the flimsiest of evidence. I fear that this is precisely what is going on down on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Let the record show that there has been no fundamental change in Fidel Castro's policies. None whatever. If you doubt it, ask Mario de Armis who is acknowledged by the U.S. State Department as the Cuban prisoner who has served the longest sentence—30 years in a Castro prison—for his political beliefs. He committed no crime. He just did not agree with Fidel Castro. He was not a Communist. So, to jail he was sent by Castro for 30 years.

Mr. de Armis supports the U.S. embargo. Let me quote exactly what he said recently:

Stand on the side of the oppressed against the dictator Fidel Castro. It is not my opinion but the opinion of everybody. I refer to the working people of Cuba, that the embargo should be maintained, it should be kept in effect, it should be strengthened.

Or you might want to ask Armando Valladares, who was locked up for 20 years in a Castro prison. He said in a recent letter to me, "I strongly believe that the remaining days of Castro's tyranny will be shortened once your Libertad bill is passed."

Now, Mr. President, it is not just those who have suffered under Castro who have been forced to flee. It is not these people alone who favor continued isolation of Castro. It is those still inside Cuba, still struggling for freedom, who also endorse a tightening of the embargo.

Recently, I received a letter signed by scores of Cubans inside Cuba who courageously, at great risk to themselves and their personal safety, endorsed the Libertad bill. Let me quote from their letter: "Because of a wicked turn of destiny, a history with contrasting elements is repeating itself in Cuba. In the early years of the revolutionary triumph, the government headed by Castro confiscated all private property belonging to both Cuban and foreign capitalists to save economically the fledgling revolution."

"In 1995," the letter continues, "and in order to save the same revolution, socialism and [its] alleged gains, the same properties are put on sale for other capitalists to buy although this represents no benefit for the Cuban people."

Now, Mr. President, the letter is long but let me refer to one more state-

ment: "We support the alternative you propose."

Now, Mr. President, he is referring to the pending legislation now before the U.S. Senate. He goes on to say "Its approval will mean a definite turn in our favor. We thank you sincerely for what you are doing."

Now, these people, who are still in Cuba, and who ran a personal risk in writing their letter to me, said—referring to the impact of the economic embargo—"The economic embargo maintained by subsequent administrations has begun to have its effect, felt not against the people, but against those who cling to power."

Despite the risk of arrest and intimidation and forced exile, these letters of support coming to me and, I am sure, coming to Congressman BURTON and other Members of the House and Senate of the United States in support of the pending bill, continue to make their way out of Cuba and on to our desks in the Senate and in the House of Representatives.

I must emphasize, for the sake of clarity, that these are the people on the front line in Cuba. They know firsthand what kind of man Castro is and has been. They know what he represents. They are in a position to judge best what the impact of the pending bill, the Libertad bill, the Helms-Burton bill, will have in Cuba.

Now, some opponents of the pending legislation have recently made claims that it is time to normalize relations with Castro, that he has made political and economic reforms, and that Cuba is open for business and that we are somehow missing out on golden opportunities.

Some prominent people in business circles contend that we are missing out on what they describe as golden opportunities.

They seem willing to overlook the thousands of people murdered by Castro, the thousands of people who have been locked up in Castro's dingy prisons. No problem, they say, in effect. Just do a little business with Castro, make a little profit off of the misery of these Cuban people.

Talk about callous nonsense—Castro has not implemented even one serious political move toward a free society in the last 36 years—not once. His economic reforms have been designed more to alleviate pressure on his regime than to permit the betterment of the Cuban people.

The Cuban economy is in shambles. It is, in fact, in such dire straits that Castro has laid off some 500,000 to 800,000 workers, more than one-fifth of Cuba's work force.

Even Castro's new foreign investment law that has been trumpeted all around in big business circles, this foreign investment law continues to place economic decisionmaking in the hands not of free enterprise but in the hands of the Cuban Communist Government.

It has nothing to do with economic freedom for the Cuban people. The

Cuban Communists, Mr. Castro's crowd, do you not know, will still dictate which Cubans get jobs and which Cubans will not. They will determine how much Cubans will be paid, and it is a pitiful sum that they intend to be paid.

So, I think we ought to stop kidding ourselves. We are still dealing with a tyrant, a tyrant who is determined to keep his grip on power. Fidel Castro is not now interested, nor has he ever been interested, in bringing genuine economic and political freedom to Cuba. That is why 30 Senators introduced the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, the Libertad Act or the Helms-Burton bill, however you want to identify it.

We are convinced that real political and economic change will come to Cuba only by and when pressure is increased on the Castro regime and while we continue to make clear that we are supporting the Cuban people.

This combination of pressure on Castro and support for the Cuban people is central to the pending legislation, the Libertad bill.

What does this bill do? It certainly does more than stiffens sanctions. It has three separate and distinct objectives.

First, to bring an early end to the Castro regime by cutting off hard currency that keeps the Castro crowd afloat. Without hard currency from the outside, Mr. Castro's days will certainly be numbered. If you want to keep Castro in power, let him get hard currency from outside. But I say no, cut off the hard currency to Fidel.

Second, the bill stipulates that planning should start now for United States support to a democratic transition in Cuba with full respect for the self-determination of the Cuban people.

And third, of course, is to protect the property confiscated from United States citizens by Castro and his crowd, property that is being exploited this very day by Fidel Castro to subsidize his Communist regime, with foreign companies earning blood money at the expense of the Cuban people. That is what this bill is all about.

The proactive strategy set forth in this legislation preserves United States credibility with the Cuban people; it shows that the United States is one of the few countries not willing to legitimize the brutality of the Castro regime in exchange for some mythical market share.

Here is the point, Mr. President: This legislation seeks to break the status quo by extending an offer of broad, U.S. support for a peaceful transition, while providing disincentives to companies whose ventures prop up the Castro crowd, the Castro regime, the Communist regime in Cuba, that is exploiting the labor of the Cuban people and the resources of the American property owners. That is what those who want to prop up Castro are willing to do. They are willing to forget all of the murders, all of the decades in which

people have suffered in jails since Castro took power.

Since this bill was introduced, there has been an unprecedented hue and cry from Mr. Castro's crowd in Havana and, to be honest about it, from certain quarters in the United States.

All sorts of dire consequences have been forecast about this bill's probable impact on United States relations with the Europeans and the Canadians. Well, la de da, the Canadians, after all, have been transshipping sugar from Cuba all along, in violation of United States law. I could catalog a lot of other things that ought to be stopped, which the U.S. Government ought to get about the business of stopping.

In any case, many of the same predictions that Congress heard in 1992 during the debate on the Cuban Democracy Act are being said today. Nothing came of those predictions about ruptured relations; but the predictions that did materialize were felt by Castro, who was and is the target of the Cuban Democracy Act.

The only dire consequences of the Libertad bill's enactment are dire for Mr. Castro. And I do not mind telling you I want to set his tail feathers afire, which is long overdue. He has tormented his own people long enough. I do not have much sympathy for the view held by Americans who do not feel that the United States ought to come to the aid of the Cuban people. We should have done it a long time ago.

The pending bill will hurt Mr. Castro at his most vulnerable point—his pocketbook. It makes clear that only a democratic Cuba, a free Cuba, will receive the benefits of American trade and recognition.

Cuba is the last Communist nation in this hemisphere. There once was a bunch of them. Castro is losing his grip on power. He knows it. We know it. And anybody with average vision ought to be able to see it. Why else has Castro launched such an aggressive campaign against this Libertad bill and in favor of lifting the embargo? Everybody knows that. Castro wants an influx of American hard currency. That is what he needs most. That is the only thing that will keep him afloat in the crisis that is growing over his head.

What Mr. Castro does not want is for the pending legislation to become law. For those who genuinely support freedom for the Cuban people, that, it seems to me, is the best reason for this United States Senate to follow the lead of the United States House of Representatives in approving the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the letters from the prodemocracy activists in Cuba and Armando Valladares be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

PARTIDO SOLIDARIDAD DEMOCRATICA,
Havana, Cuba, September 20, 1995.

Hon. JESSIE HELMS,
Chairman of the U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Regulations.

Because of a wicked turn of destiny, a history with contrasting elements is repeating itself in Cuba. In the early years of the revolutionary triumph, the government headed by Castro confiscated all private property belonging to both Cuban and foreign capitalists to "save" economically the fledgling revolution. In 1995 and in order to "save" the same revolution socialism, and alleged gains, the same properties are put on sale for other capitalists to buy although this represents no benefit for the Cuban people.

The economic embargo maintained by subsequent American Administrations has begun to make its influence, felt not against the people, but against those who cling to power. These effects are felt after the downfall of the socialist camp. Which forced the Havana regime to improvise economic moves, waiting for a miracle to pull them out of a very difficult situation.

Against these efforts by the last totalitarian dictatorship in the continent, the Act of Freedom and Democratic Solidarity with Cuba sponsored by you is the most positive option. Efforts in other directions offer doubtful solutions in such a long term that the agony of over 10 million people cannot wait.

We support the alternative you propose. Its approval will mean a definite turn in our favor. We thank you sincerely for what you are doing and we are sure that those who criticize you today will congratulate you tomorrow for your unobjectable contribution to process of democratic transformation in Cuba.

On behalf of a wide sector of the Opposition Movement I represent and on my own I congratulate you and pray to God for the success of your effort.

Embracing you,
ELIZARDO SAMPEDRO MARIN,
Presidente.

OTHER SUPPORT OF THE LIBERTAD BILL

Héctor Palacios Ruiz, Vice-presidente del PSD.

Leonel Morejón Almagro, Presidente de NATURPAZ (Defensores de ecología y medio ambiente).

Odilia Collazo, Presidenta Partido Pro Derechos Humanos de Cuba.

Fernando Sanchez Lopez, Presidente de la APAL (Asociacion Pro Arte Libre).

Adolfo Fernandez Sainz, Ejecutivo del PSD.

Raul Rivero, Poeta y Periodista (Miembro del PSD/Agencia de Prensa Habana Press).

Orfilio Garcia Quesada, Asociacion de Ingenieros Independientes de Cuba.

Juan Pérez Izquierdo, Periodista PSD.

Rafael Solano Marales, Director Habana Press.

Amador Blanco, Comision de Derechos Humanos "Jose Marti" de Caibarien.

José R Marante, Consejo Medico Cub Independiente.

Dianelys Gonzalez, Asociacion Trab de la Salud Ind.

Pedro A Gonzalez Rodriguez, PSD prov Habana.

Caridad Falcón Vento, PSD Prov Pinar del Rao.

Hector Peraza Linares, Periodista PSD.

Mercedes Parada Antunez, Presidenta ADEPO.

Jesus Zuñiga, Director Centro de Información del PSD.

Secundino Coste Valdes, Periodista y Presidente de la Organizacion Opositora Panchito Gomez Toro.

Ernesto Ibar, Presidente Asoc Jovenes Democratas.

Félix Navarro, PSD de Perico, Matanzas.
 Ivan Hernandez, PSD de Colon, Matanzas.
 Abel Acosta, Partido Pro Derechos Humanos Cifuentes.
 Mercedes Ruiz Fleites, PSD Santa Clara.
 Francis Campaneria, PSD Camaguey.
 Aurelio Sanchez, Partido Social Cristiano.
 Luis E. Frometa, Alianza Cristiana.
 Raquel Guerra Capote, Federacion Mujeres Amalia Simoni.
 Blanco Gallo, Alianza Metodista Cristiana.
 Carlos Oruña Liriano, Asoc Reconstruccion Democrata.
 Silvia Lopez Reyes, Mov Fe, Democracia y Dignidad.
 Alejandro Perez, Liga por la Reivindicacion Cristiana Nacional.
 Josue Brown, Liga Evangelica Juvenil.
 Gloria Hernandez Molina, Mov Catolico Democratico.
 Guillermo Gutierrez, Union Evangelica Oriental.
 Victor Suarez, Democrata Autentico Cristiano.
 Eduardo Valverde, Accion Patriotica Civilista.
 Onelio Barzaga, Mov Revolucionario Cubano autentico.
 Agustin Figueredo, Union de Activistas Pro Derechos Humanos "Golfo de Guacanayabo."
 Jose Angel Peña, PSD prov Granma.
 Nidia Espinosa Carales, PSD prov Granma.
 Rafael Abreu Manzur, PSD prov Santiago de Cuba.
 Nicolas Rosario, Centro de Derechos Humanos de prov Santiago de Cuba.
 Maria Antonia Escobedo, Frente Democratico Oriental.
 Aristides Cisneros Roque, PSD Guantánamo.
 Jorge Dante Abad Herrera, Partido Cubano pro Derechos Humanos de la prov Guantánamo.

ARMANDO VALLADARES,
Springfield, VA, September 21, 1995.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SIR: I am a former political prisoner of Fidel Castro's jails where I was confined for twenty-two long years. In those jails I saw many of my best friends die due to horrible tortures and inhumane treatment.

I strongly believe that the remaining days of Castro's tyranny will be shortened once your "Libertad" bill, now up for a vote, is passed. The endorsement of your legislation by the most influential dissident leaders inside Cuba proves that they are convinced, as I am, that this law is an important contribution towards our goal, a "Free and Democratic Cuba."

I commend you for your relentless effort and leadership. While the rest of the world seems to be content and sits idle watching the destruction of a country and its people, individuals like yourself come forward to fulfill a duty. That is eliminating injustices and abuses wherever they occur.

Que Viva Cuba Libre.

ARMANDO VALLADARES,
*Former U.S. Ambassador,
 U.N. Human Rights Commission.*

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator from North Carolina withhold? I believe the Senator from Rhode Island seeks recognition. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. HELMS. Of course.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, I have a couple of points to make. One of them

is, it seems to me unwise to support tacitly the practice of submitting a cloture motion at the same time as a bill or amendment is submitted. I think if this becomes a precedent, it could lead to abuse.

Second, I would like to make the observation that I think I am probably the only Member of this body who has lived under communism for a year or two, a couple of years, and been exposed to it.

I have been to Castro's Cuba four times since being in the Senate and twice to Guantanamo. My view is that the best medicine we can give the Cubans is to submit them to exposure to freedom and fresh air and clear light, that this is what gets rid of communism. I think back to when I lived under the Iron Curtain. We used to say the same thing, that communism would die of its own evil, which it did; of its own ineptitude, which it did. And this is what we should admit to having with Cuba. And, I submit, the legislation before us does not do that.

I believe all my colleagues agree on the goals of American policy toward Cuba—promoting a peaceful transition to democracy, economic liberalization and greater respect for human rights while simultaneously controlling immigration from Cuba. What is clearly different is how we get there. In my view, the legislation before us today is going to take us further away from achieving these goals and is contrary to U.S. national interests.

Rather than ratcheting up the pressure even further in order to isolate Cuba, as this bill would do, we should be expanding contact with the Cuban people. In that regard, I believe the measures announced by President Clinton last week are a step in the right direction. These measures include the reciprocal opening of news bureaus in the United States and Cuba in order to improve the accuracy of the bilateral flow of information; support for the development of independent, nongovernmental organizations in Cuba in order to strengthen civil society; clarification of standards for travel for purposes of news gathering, research, cultural, educational, religious and human rights activities; simplification of regulations that govern travel to Cuba by the Cuban-Americans for extreme humanitarian emergencies such as death or illness of family members; and, finally, authorization for Western Union to open offices in Cuba to facilitate the transfer of funds that are currently permissible for purposes of paying legal immigration fees and for case-by-case humanitarian needs.

Of course, I would like to see the administration go even further in order to permit the full, free flow of information and people between our two countries because I believe this would best facilitate the transition to democracy.

Under appropriate circumstances, too, I would support lifting the embargo. I say this not because I believe the Cuban Government should be rewarded.

In fact, I am amongst those who are disappointed that the Cuban Government has failed to make truly meaningful steps toward political reform and improved human rights. Nor do I believe that should be done as a quid pro quo. We should undertake policy measures to enhance—not decrease—to enhance contact with the Cuban people, because that will serve American national interests; namely, the fostering of the peaceful transition to democracy on that island.

In my view, greater contact with the Cuban people will plant the seeds of change and advance the cause of democracy just as greater exchange with the West helped hasten the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. In his posthumously published book, former President Nixon wrote that "we should drop the economic embargo and open the way to trade, investment and economic interaction * * *". Nixon believed we would better help the Cuban people by building "pressure from within by actively stimulating Cuba's economic contacts with the free world."

The Cuban Government has been expanding political and economic ties with the rest of the world. These economic relations in and of themselves are no substitute for the economic benefits that would accrue from more normal relations with the United States, but they do provide sufficient space for Castro to refuse to give in to U.S. demands.

I think it is naive to think that the measure before us today is going to succeed in forcing Castro to step aside, where all other pressures have not. However, the measures proposed in this bill do have the serious potential of further worsening the living conditions of the Cuban people and once again making a mass exodus for Miami an attractive option. Taken to its most extreme, this bill could even provoke serious violence on the island.

This legislation is even more problematic than earlier efforts to tighten the screws on Castro. I say this because its implications go well beyond United States-Cuban relations. Not only does it alienate our allies and tie the administration's foreign policy hands, it also seriously injures certain Americans in order to benefit a class of individuals in the Cuban-American community. In the process, it throws out the window more than 40 years of international law and practice, in the area of expropriation.

Finally, it will make more difficult the transformation of the Cuban economy to a market based on economy, because of the complex property issues associated with these pending court judgments.

Contact and dialog between Havana and Washington will bring about democracy on the Island of Cuba, not isolation and impoverishment. Perhaps if we took that approach, our allies

would seek a similar course, and realize that they might compromise some of their approaches with us.

I only ask my colleagues to observe the lessons of what happened with the removal of communism in Eastern Europe when it was forced out—when the light, free air, and freshness of democracy swept it out. But if you build walls and isolate that will not occur.

I yield the floor.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, thank you.

Mr. President, this legislation presents the Senate with an opportunity to remind the people of Cuba that we have not forgotten them. Nor have we forgotten the decades of suffering and oppression inflicted on them by the brutal Castro dictatorship which began in 1958. With freedom on the march throughout the Americas, Communist Cuba is desperately fighting to preserve its experiment in government through enslavement. Now more than ever we must redouble our resolve and our efforts to rid our hemisphere of thugs like Fidel Castro and those who support him. I am proud to cosponsor this legislation which specifically stiffens sanctions against the Communist elite of Cuba who are exploiting confiscated property in a last ditch effort to preserve their privileged status.

The most important element of this legislation is contained in title III. It creates a new right of action that allows U.S. nationals to sue those who are exploiting their confiscated property in Cuba. This provision is necessary to protect the rights of United States nationals whose property has been confiscated by the Cuban Government without just and adequate compensation—in fact, without any compensation. This new civil remedy will also discourage persons and companies from engaging in commercial transactions involving confiscated property, and in so doing deprive Cuba's Communist elite of the capital—the cash money—which they need to perpetuate their exploitation of the people of Cuba.

This legislation does not compromise existing foreign claims settlement procedures, nor does it dilute the claims of the original certified claimants. It simply provides an additional remedy made available to all U.S. nationals whose claims are not covered under existing settlement mechanisms. In fact, we are making the recovery process less complicated because it will protect additional properties until claimed by their rightful owners under the laws of a democratic Cuba which I hope will come soon.

In the recent past, the United States expended significant effort to liberate the people of Haiti from a military dictatorship. Today the Clinton administration continues to spend enormous sums of taxpayers' dollars on Haiti.

Every day I grow less certain of the administration's resolve to ensure that Haiti's present government is committed to democracy and liberty.

Recent White House policies toward Cuba also cause me to question whether President Clinton has the resolve necessary to maintain United States pressure on the Castro regime. Regardless, there should be no doubt about congressional resolve to stay the course toward liberation for the people of Cuba. This bill is an essential step toward achieving that goal. I strongly support it and encourage colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, my understanding is that this piece of legislation comes to the Senate floor without having been through a markup in the committee so that members of the committee could debate and potentially amend the legislation.

It, like so many other pieces of legislation these days, is cobbled together quickly—the Lord only knows where—and it is moved to the floor. And we are told, here is the issue. You go ahead and debate it. The regular order, of course, would be to have some hearings on something that represents a national problem, and, as a result of the hearings, understand the dimension of the problem and then to try to construct some appropriate, sensible, reasonable conclusion that addresses the problem, move it through a markup in the committee, and then bring it to the floor and debate it.

That is the way you would do something, if you are really interested in doing it the right way. But we see, unfortunately, a Senate and a Congress that these days seems intent on hour by hour and day by day changing the itinerary and the schedule and cobbling together some half-notion of what is in the press yesterday and how we might legislate responding to it tomorrow.

Well, I came to the floor today not so much to talk about Castro and Cuba. I know this bill is about Castro and Cuba. And I know that Castro and Cuba are a presence in our lives and around, and that we have to respond to and deal with them.

Frankly, Fidel Castro and Cuba are not the most important things in the lives of people I represent.

We have a Senate that is in session today. Very few Members are here for debate. And we have in the Chamber on the agenda the need to discuss Cuba and Castro.

We have had hearings during this Congress on all kinds of issues. We have had 11 days of hearings on Waco. We have had 10 days of hearings on Ruby Ridge. We have had 24 days of hearings on Whitewater. But I represent a part of the country that has a fairly high percentage of the population of the elderly who are concerned about Medicare and Medicaid, policies

dealing with nursing homes, hospitals, and doctors.

We are seeing a proposal for a substantial change in the Medicare Program, and there were not any hearings on the specific plan that was laid down about a week and a half, 2 weeks ago, none. Some might say, well, we held a bunch of hearings beforehand so we thought through it then. Now we have put together this proposal.

My question is, well, if you have a proposal that you held close to your vest here for some long while, then unveiled it at the last moment, why did we not have a day or a week or 2 weeks of hearings about what is proposed to be done with Medicare? What about the specific plan? What does it do? What is the impact? What will it mean to the future of Medicare? What will it mean for senior citizens who rely on Medicare, for rural hospitals?

There are a lot of things that are important. Castro and Cuba rank well below, in my judgment, the question of what are the priorities that this Congress is establishing for the future of this country.

One thing is certain. We are not certain about a lot of things, but one thing is certain. One hundred years from now no one here will be alive—no one. But 100 years from now those who choose to wonder what we were about, what kind of value system we had, what we cared about, what we thought was important and dear to us, they will be able to look at how we spent our resources in this country. They will be able to look at the Federal budget and say, here is how that group of Americans at that point in time decided to spend its public resources. And they will be able to tell a little something about what we felt was important, how we felt we would advance the interests of the country.

I sat in the Chamber of the House of Representatives this morning, as did some of my colleagues, and heard a wonderful tribute to the veterans of the Second World War on the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. And it was remarkable to see the number of people who stood up in that Chamber when asked, all the Medal of Honor winners, to stand up. And you looked around with a tear in your eye and seen those people who won this country's highest honor, who exhibited uncommon bravery, risked their lives, were wounded, and did extraordinary things to save the lives of others. And you realize what people have sacrificed for this country, what this country has done for itself and for others around the world.

One of the speakers this morning was STROM THURMOND, a wonderful Senator in this Chamber, in his nineties. I assume he would not mind if we mentioned his age. It is probably published all over—a vibrant and interesting Senator who has been here some long while, and when he spoke this morning I was remembering a conversation I had with him.

He, as I recall, enlisted in the Second World War when he was over the age of 40 and went overseas and then volunteered to get up in a glider, to be pulled aloft at night with some volunteers to crash land behind enemy lines in Normandy. This was not an 18- or 20-year-old kid; this was a fellow in his forties who volunteered to risk his life to do that. And I had a talk with him one day about what was going through his mind: Was he scared? Was he frightened?

I will never forget the discussion I had with Senator THURMOND—a wonderful discussion. I just thought to myself, what some people have done, gone through in this country is quite remarkable.

There was then a spirit of unity that was extraordinary in this country. We came together to do things, do things to preserve freedom and liberty. There is a kind of a shattering of the spirit, some say, these days. I do not know that that is true, but I know that there is some discord because it is so much easier for people to focus on what is wrong rather than what is right, to focus on the negative rather than the positive. And I understand all of that. I understand the tendency people have to hold something up to the light and say, "Gee, look at that imperfection; isn't that ugly? Isn't that awful?"

Sure. But it is not the whole story. Part of the story of this country is not just the celebration of what we have done in the Second World War to keep this world free and beat back the oppression of Nazism. Part of the story of this country is what a lot of those in this Chamber who came before us decided to stand up and do for our country. I was not here when they decided we ought to have the Social Security system, but, boy, I cannot express enough gratitude to those who had enough courage to stand up in the face of cries of socialism by others, saying, how could you possibly propose a program like this?

Well, I am glad there were enough builders, enough people who decided there are positive things to do that benefit this country, I am glad there were enough of them around to stand up and have their vote counted, which meant we now have a Social Security system in our country. It probably was not very easy for them. It was not more than 30 years ago Medicare was proposed, and the easiest thing in the world is to be opposed to everything. The old story goes it takes more skill to build a building than it does to wreck a building. It takes no skill to tear something down. We all understand that.

I was not here in the early 1960's, but the first people who brought Medicare to the floor of the Senate, recognizing that half of the senior citizens of this country had no health care coverage, were willing to stand here and make the case for the need for some dignity and some protection and some security for the elderly in this country. I regret

to say 97 percent of the folks on the other side of the aisle said, we are sorry; we do not believe in this; we are going to vote against it; Medicare ought not happen.

Well, we persisted, those who were here before us persisted, and we developed a Medicare Program. And it has been a wonderful program. Perfect? No. Are there some blemishes? Yes. Does it need some adjustment? Sure. Has it been a positive thing for the senior citizens of this country? You bet it has. Ninety nine percent of the senior citizens of this country now have health care coverage and do not in their declining years, do not in their older years sit in abject fear of getting sick. That is a wonderful thing and a wonderful story as a part of the progress in our country.

Some will say, well, you can talk all you want about Medicare and Social Security, but the fact is those things do not work; this country is coming apart. And they will cite as evidence some of the enormous challenges we face. And I understand some of those challenges. We have racial tensions in our country. We are racially divided and we must address that. Mr. President, 23,000 murders. We have a crime epidemic, and we have to find a way to solve that; nearly 10 million people who are out of work and looking for a job; 25 million people on food stamps; 40 million people living in poverty; slightly over a million babies this year will be born out of wedlock with no father; 8,000 to 9,000 of them will never in their lifetime learn the identity of their father.

Challenges? Troubles? Absolutely. Absolutely. But you do not solve those problems and you do not address challenges by running away and pretending they do not exist. The question is, how do we meet these challenges? Where do all of us meet these challenges? What kind of things do we do first individually in our homes, then in our communities, and then, yes, in our elected Government, in the Congress? How do we come together with approaches and plans that address these vexing problems that confront our country?

If I did not think the future of this country is brighter than the past, I would hardly have the energy and strength to do this job. I am convinced that if you look at all of these problems together, you will conclude that a country that survived a major depression, that beat back the oppressive forces of tyranny and Nazism in the Second World War, a country that has met challenge after challenge, will meet these challenges. But we will not do it by turning our backs on the past and by deciding that those things that we have done together that make this a better country we should now take apart.

Most especially we are now in this Chamber involved in the process of making choices, choices about what we think will advance the interests of this country. It is not so much, in my judg-

ment, choices between conservatives and liberals because, frankly, I think you have appetites in every chair in this Chamber to spend public money.

I recall when the defense bill came to the floor of the Senate, as will my colleagues. I was astounded to find that the bill for this country's defense, to appropriate money for America's defense, recommended by the Secretary of Defense and the four branches of our armed services, came to the floor of the Senate having had \$7 billion added to it to buy ships, planes, submarines no one asked for, to buy B-2 bombers—20 of them are \$30 billion—to start a Star Wars program and say; "By the way, we not only want to start it, we want you to deploy it in the field by 1999 on an accelerated basis."

The same people who come here and order B-2 bombers, whose cost for a nose wheel and a fuel gauge would pay for all the Head Start programs in our country with 55,000 kids, they also want to kick off Head Start, say to us: "Well, what is really important in our country is to have the B-2's. Do not talk to us about Head Start," they say.

This is all about choices. What choices do we make that advance this country's interests? The same people who came to this floor and said, "We want \$7 billion more for defense. We want B-2's and star wars and so on"—and, incidentally, they also, I think page 167 of the defense authorization bill said they want \$60 million for blimps. The hood ornament of goofiness is to buy 60 million dollars' worth of blimps. Lord knows what the Hindenburg strategy for buying blimps is. I searched far and wide in this Chamber to find out who wrote in \$60 million to have blimps and failed to find out who it was. I concluded it is an immaculate conception in this bill with no discernible author.

Having said all that, the same people who wrote all of this into the defense bill said, when it came time to deal with the other side of America's needs: "We're sorry. We're out of money." We had plenty of money for this defense need well above what the Secretary asked for. "We insist you buy planes you did not ask for and ships you did not order, the two amphibious ships." Two of them—we chose one for \$3.9 billion and one for \$900 million. "Why be misers? We want to build both of them," they said. I will not even talk about submarines.

But the point is this: They said we can afford everything in defense, even what the Secretary of Defense did not ask for. We insist on wanting to give a tax cut, over half the benefit of which will go to Americans with over \$100,000 in income.

So I brought an amendment to the floor and said if we are going to have to choose and we are going to set priorities, please let us do this, let us decide that the tax cut will go to working families and we will limit the benefits of the tax cut at least to those families earning below \$100,000 in income and

use the savings from that limitation of who gets the tax cut to below \$100,000 in income to reduce the heavy cut they are going to make in Medicare. At least let us do that, limit the tax cut to those under \$100,000 in income, and use that to try to at least eliminate some of the heavy hit on Medicare.

No, they did not want to go for that. All of them voted against it. Well, I want to give them another chance. I am going to offer another amendment this week, maybe \$500,000. Would you agree at least to limit the tax cut to people who make less than \$500,000 a year and use the savings in order to reduce the hit on Medicare? I mean, it seems to me this is all about choices and priorities.

A question we asked with respect to this budget is, do family farmers matter? Do kids matter? Is nutrition important? Does education advance this country's interests? All of those are questions we are asking. And we are answering those questions by what we decide to spend the public's money on.

Now, as I said earlier, I do not despair about the answers to these questions because I think one way or the other, one day the American people will come to the right conclusions. We want to get to the same location. All of us want to move this country ahead. We want this country to have more economic opportunity, more growth, better educated kids. We all want the same things but we have very different views on how we get there.

The new ideas these days, incidentally, are the ideas of block grants and flat taxes. I am thinking about the words "block" and "flat." It is really hard, it seems to me, to build a political movement using the words "block" and "flat." Block grants are, you just take all this money that comes into the Federal coffers and send it all back someplace else and say, "By the way, you spend it back someplace else, and no strings attached."

I say, why put 3,000 miles on a dollar? Why send money from North Dakota to Washington, only to send it back and say, you spend it, spend it as you wish? Why not cut down on the travel? You want to do that? You think nutrition is not a national need? Then why do you not just tell the Governors, You handle nutrition issues. You raise the money back home and you spend it? Personally, I would not support that. But that would be a more honest approach, probably a more responsible use of the taxpayers' dollar.

Flat taxes. That is an old, old idea dressed in new clothes that says, Let's have the wealthiest Americans pay less taxes and families pay a little more. I mean, it is part of the same philosophy that the problem in this country is the rich have too little and the poor have too much. And we must, some feel, come to this floor and make choices that remedy that by giving the rich more and taking from the poor.

Well, Medicare, Medicaid, education, family farming—these are the prior-

ities, the issues that we need to discuss.

What about Medicare? Some say what are you talking about is cutting Medicare. No one is proposing cutting Medicare. No one. We are simply reducing the rate of growth. Let us analyze that just for a moment.

We know what it will cost to fund the Medicare program over the next 7 years. Two hundred thousand new Americans every month become eligible for Medicare. That is how America is graying. We know what Medicare will cost with the new people becoming eligible and also with the increased cost of health care each year. That being the case, if you cut \$270 billion from what is needed to fund the Medicare program, the fact is you are cutting Medicare. Yes, you are cutting the rate of growth, but you are also cutting Medicare in terms of what is needed.

Medicaid, well, if you cut 20, 25, 30 percent out of what a State needs—and North Dakota is cut 22 percent from what we need to fund Medicaid—then you say, By the way, there will be no national standards any longer for nursing homes. Do you think you have advanced the interests of this country, the interests of the poor, the interests of people who need help? I do not think so.

Education. Somebody wore a T-shirt once that said: "If you're interested in the next year, plant rice; interested in the next 10 years, plant trees; interested in the next century, educate kids." Education must also be our priority. The stamp of choice these days applied in this Chamber is that does not matter as much as B-2 bombers, probably does not even matter as much as Cuba to some.

Mr. President, we do not have much opportunity to debate these issues in lengthy hearings, in lengthy analysis of what it all means to people, to people who rely on Medicare and Medicaid, rely on guaranteed student loans or rely on the safety net for family farmers.

So we must take this time on the floor of the Senate to discuss what all this means and where it moves America. I hope that no one will decide that these debates are unworthy or for one reason or another these debates do not matter. It is not a sign of weakness that we cannot agree and have debates. That is the way a democracy works. My hope is that these debates as they unfold will inform the American people about these policies and what they mean for the future.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DORGAN. I will be happy to.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I wanted to ask the Senator a few questions.

First of all, Mr. President, I want to ask the Senator from North Dakota—I mean, I try to spend time in cafes in Minnesota, have coffee, unfortunately too much pie, with the people and just ask people what they are thinking about.

Has the Senator found in North Dakota that, when you go into a cafe, on the list of people's priorities, the Senate right now should be debating Cuba?

I have a whole series of questions. Does it come up at all?

Mr. DORGAN. I was in North Dakota all last week because the Senate had no votes last week. I did not hear one North Dakotan talk to me about Cuba. It does not mean Cuba is not interesting or important; it is that they are interested in the issues that affect their daily lives—farm programs, Medicare, and so on.

Mr. WELLSTONE. The second question I want to ask the Senator from North Dakota is, I said on the floor last week—and actually sometimes words come to you, but I actually now believe that this is exactly what is happening—that what I see going on here is a rush to recklessness, a fast track to foolishness.

Is there, on the part of people in North Dakota—let us start off just talking about Medicare recipients. I want to ask you about medical assistance and some other programs as well. I mean, do you find both with the beneficiaries and with the caregivers, whether it be in the rural parts of the State—North Dakota is mainly rural—or some of your larger cities—that would be our metro area—do you find a tremendous concern about what is going on in Washington where people feel like we do not have the information of what is going on?

It is not even that people necessarily reached a conclusion yet, but that they really want to know. They yearn for information. And they want to know exactly what is happening and how it is going to affect their view.

How is it going to affect them? Do you sense that in your State, and what are the concerns that you hear the most from people?

Mr. DORGAN. I think people are worried about a lot of things. They are worried about the fact that we do not have a balanced budget. People want us to put our books in order, to balance our budget.

I agree with that, and most Members agree with that. This is not a debate about whether the budget should be balanced. A number of us supported a balanced budget plan that was offered during the budget debate on the floor of the Senate that does have cuts in all these areas but does not single out for unfair cuts or does not propose cuts that unravel programs that a lot of Americans rely on, and certainly did not say to people at the upper-income scale of our country, "You have a million bucks, \$2 million, \$5 million. Guess what? Start smiling, we're going to give you a big tax cut." That was not in our budget, because we think there is a right way to balance the Federal budget. Do the hard work, balance the budget, make the tough choices and then later talk about the tax system.

I would like to find tax relief for working families. But at the moment,

let us figure out how you balance the budget, and there are different ways of doing it.

You do not have to balance the budget by saying, "By the way, we want a \$245 billion tax cut, on the one hand, and then we want a \$270 billion cut in Medicare, on the other hand."

Someone asked me in North Dakota, "Why don't you just decide not to do the tax cut and that would provide most of the money for the Medicare problem."

I said, "Some people feel very strongly that this country will only grow if you give the Wall Street crowd more money in the form of tax breaks."

I do not happen to share that. If we are going to give tax breaks, we ought to give it to working families. We ought not talk about tax breaks, even if it is popular at the moment, until we solve the deficit problem. And I want to solve it the right way, not the wrong way.

The wrong way is to decide, for example, on Medicare and Medicaid—Medicaid is a good example—that we will send that problem back to the States by sending bulk money in the form of block grants. We will send to North Dakota 22 percent less than what is needed for Medicaid, and then at the same time say, "Oh, by the way, there are no national standards for nursing homes anymore."

You know the consequence of that. We have been through this. We have seen nursing homes. We have seen nursing homes where they put some old person in a restraint system so they cannot move their arms, and they sit in a chair for hour after hour after hour. They cannot scratch their cheek, they cannot wipe a tear from their eye, they cannot move, and often are not attended.

We have seen circumstances like that in this country, and we decided there ought to be some basic standards for nursing home care. I have been in nursing homes plenty, plenty. I am pleased to say, at least the ones I have been in, especially the one with my father for a long, long while, I am pleased to say he got good care. But I do not want to go back to the old days when we say, "By the way, you don't care. If you're poor and old, that's your tough luck."

I think we ought to have circumstances where we say that national standards for nursing homes make sense. They were worthwhile, they are still necessary, and we ought to say that we are willing to take care of the needs of poor people who need long-term care in nursing homes. If we can take care of the needs of a millionaire to say, "By the way, you deserve a tax cut today," is it reasonable to say now we cannot afford to take care of someone who has reached 70, 80 years old who has Alzheimer's and no money? That does not square with the priorities I learned when I grew up in a small town in North Dakota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. If the Senator will yield for another question, and I know

the Senator from Arkansas has done a lot of work in this area of nursing homes and may want to ask some questions, but I would like to ask another question of the Senator. I have a few more, and I will not speak so much. I will put it in the form of a question.

Last week I spent a lot of time, and I will not even talk about the education front of it right now, with the people in the State and also at a hearing at the State capital. I, too, visited a number of different nursing homes.

In my own case, both my parents had Parkinson's disease, so it is a very personal issue with me. I think when people can stay at home, that is the way you should do it, live at home with dignity. Sometimes people describe to me a nursing home as a home away from home.

A number of the caregivers said to me that they do not know—with the medical assistance, in Minnesota about 60 percent of our medical assistance funding is for nursing homes and about two-thirds of the people in the homes receive medical assistance—they said they do not know exactly how they are going to absorb these cuts. We have been hearing a lot about Medicare, but they are really frightened about these cuts and they do not know whether it means they change eligibility or whether they reduce standards. I did not hear anyone, and I want to ask you this, I did not hear any one of the administrators—

Mr. HELMS. Point of order. Point of order. This is not a question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I did not—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Point of order. Point of order. The Senator is not asking a question, he is making a speech.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Yes, I want to know whether or not in North Dakota you heard any cry for removing standards for nursing homes. That is my question.

Mr. HELMS. I will call the hand of any Senator who makes a speech while asking a question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, my question was based upon—I started out by saying this is what I found in Minnesota.

Mr. HELMS. It is not a question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Did you have the same experience in North Dakota? That is my question, Mr. President. I want to know whether or not you found administrators in North Dakota who want to remove national standards and go back to the days of restraining belts?

Mr. DORGAN. I will respond to the Senator from Minnesota by saying I had a meeting in North Dakota with virtually all the nursing home administrators and hospital administrators, because I am trying to find what are the consequences. While nursing home administrators would like very much to see some loosening of regulations here and there, I do not know that there is a population of nursing home

administrators who believe that you ought to eliminate Federal standards. None of them came to me and said, "Look, let's get rid of all Federal standards."

That was not what was described to me by nursing home administrators. They clearly would like fewer regulations, I understand that. I think even nursing home administrators were surprised by the proposal that we would have no Federal standards with respect to nursing homes.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Does the Senator agree if we do not have those standards, we will go back to the days of indiscriminate use of restraining belts and the drugging of people, and that when children visit nursing homes, will the Senator agree, that when children visit nursing homes, they want to make sure their parents are receiving compassionate care?

Mr. HELMS. The Senator is making a speech again.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMPSON). The Senator can only yield for a question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. That is the question.

Mr. DORGAN. I think, Mr. President, my point about nursing home standards is that the desire by some and the proposal now by the majority party to decide there shall be no national nursing home standards of any consequence is, I think, an extreme position, and I hope on reevaluation they will decide this goes way beyond the pale; that developing sensible standards was necessary and protects a lot of people in our country who deserve that protection. I hope that they will rethink that position.

Again, let me reiterate, we are talking about a series of issues—Medicare, Medicaid, education, family farming. This is not—this is not—an issue between conservatives and liberals, because I find it interesting that some of those who claim to be the most conservative Members of the Senate—I do not know who they are—but the most conservative Members of the Senate would, when the defense appropriations bill comes to the floor, say, "Heck, just spend the farm, spend it all. There is no proposal that is too grandiose for me. Whatever it is you want to buy, let me buy it. In fact, let's not buy 'it,' let's buy 10 of them. Let's order a dozen of them. Let's have a few of them made in my State."

That is sort of the attitude when that bill comes to the floor.

And I am thinking to myself, I am pretty confused about who is liberal and who is conservative. I thought these folks were people pretty close with the dollar, did not want to spend much, and all of a sudden it is like they are on shore leave. It is spend, spend, spend when those bills come to the floor. Then when a piece of legislation comes to the floor that deals with someone else's needs, they say, "Well, gee, we are out of money."

Well, this requires, it seems to me, a compromise and choices. It is all about

priorities. We might radically disagree about priorities that advance this country's interests. But, in the end, I hope that we will finally get together and believe education, and the right investment in education, advances America's interests. End of story. I hope we can agree on that.

I hope we can all agree that there are ways to make certain that those who reach the retirement years of their lives and suffer health consequences and need long-term care really ought to receive the protection that a Medicaid program and Federal nursing home standards offer. I hope that we can come to those kinds of understandings between the most divergent positions here in the U.S. Senate. I hope that by the end of November all of us with differing positions, including the President, Republicans and Democrats, can find a way to sift through all of these differing positions and figure out a direction that makes sense for the country.

We will have to cut some spending in Medicare. I am saying that on the floor of the Senate. We need to do that. There needs to be an adjustment. It does not need to be \$270 billion and should not be \$270 billion. That is there because they need that to accommodate a tax cut.

So we do need to adjust Medicare. I agree. We need to make adjustments in a range of these areas. The question is, Which adjustments and how do we make them to advance the interests of this country? That is the important debate for us to have, I think, in the coming weeks. And often there has not been enough time for hearings so that we can make the case at hearings about the impact of these proposals.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I would like to ask the Senator from North Dakota if he would allow me to, through the Chair, address a question to my good friend from North Carolina and if he would yield to me for that purpose.

Mr. DORGAN. Yes.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I will address this question. I am wondering if my good friend from North Carolina would allow the Senator from Arkansas, say, at a time certain, to make a statement on what I consider to be the most important issue that is coming before this Congress through the balance of this session, which is the reconciliation bill. We will not, I remind my good friend—and I know he knows this—we will not have an ample opportunity—10 hours on a side—to properly debate perhaps one of the most monumental issues ever before the U.S. Senate, which is the tax cut and tax increase—

Mr. HELMS. If the Senator will yield for a moment, the Senator from North Dakota has not yielded the floor, has he?

Mr. DORGAN. That is correct. I have yielded to the Senator from Arkansas for a question.

Mr. HELMS. I cannot, under the circumstances, when an obvious filibuster

is taking away the subject at hand—to answer the question of the Senator, I will be glad on a time certain to have the floor yielded to anybody who wants to make a speech. But our side wants to talk about the pending business.

I recall that when the reorganization of the State Department legislation came up, the first speaker that trotted out over there was that great statesman from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, who did not speak on the State Department. He spoke for 2 hours, 25 minutes on the minimum wage, a subject that he never brought up once when he was chairman of the relevant committee in the previous 2 years.

So if we could have an understanding that we will have a little bit of time on this side to discuss the pending legislation while you folks are making the speeches that you want to make, sure, I will make a deal with you. What does the Senator have in mind?

Mr. PRYOR. Well, Mr. President, I am not controlling time.

Mr. HELMS. I did not say the Senator was.

Mr. PRYOR. The Senator from North Dakota is controlling time on our side at this point.

Mr. HELMS. I established that, I think, with my question to the Chair.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I respect the Senator's wishes. This is not a filibuster. I wanted to take the floor—

Mr. HELMS. Oh, yes, it is. I know one when I see it.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have watched filibusters and I have seen the good Senator filibuster. I can recognize one when I see one and have recognized them before with the good Senator. But this is not a filibuster. In fact, compared to some of the missives on the floor of the Senate, this has been relatively brief.

My intention was to come this afternoon, when I had an opportunity, to seek the floor and talk about some priorities and choices. I know others are interested in Castro and Cuba because that is the bill that was brought here. My understanding is there was no markup on the bill and no amendments offered. Anyway, it showed up on the floor of the Senate. I did not have anything to do with that. But I would like to talk about the priorities and some things that are important to me. I am pretty well done talking. It is not my intention to keep the floor. I know others wanted to do the same.

In deference to the Senator from North Carolina, it is not my intention to hold up the Senate.

Mr. DODD. If my colleague will yield, I will point out there was a cloture petition filed immediately when the bill was brought up. Under the rules of the Senate, it requires there is a cloture vote within a fixed amount of time. Even if we wanted to start a filibuster, that option has been pretty much precluded by the action taken by the majority leader.

We all know that they have at least six of our colleagues—four that are

running for President—that are going to be in New Hampshire tonight. The majority leader has announced no more votes today. This is not a filibuster. We are accommodating those who could not be here. They have gone up to debate.

We are debating Cuba. But my colleagues are raising, I think, a legitimate issue. This bill has come to the floor without any markup by the Foreign Relations Committee. They are pointing out that this is another example of a piece of legislation that has not gone through the normal process.

We are having a major transfer of wealth occurring in a few days in this country from a cut in Medicare, Medicaid, a tax break of \$240 billion, and we had zero hearings on that issue. Frankly, I think people do want—and I ask my friend whether or not he agrees with this—here we are going to spend a couple of days on Cuba, which has relevancy to some people. But ask the American people if they would rather see debate on Medicaid, Medicare, and a tax break, or some policy on Cuba. The effects of this legislation do not go into law until there is democracy in Cuba. I ask my colleague that.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, he cannot make a speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota has the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. The Senator is correct. I think everyone here knows this is not the issue of the day in the country—Cuba policy. It is the issue of the day on the Senate agenda, brought to us with relatively little notice, without going through a markup, which is fine. The fact is that the majority party has the right to do that.

Also, as the Senator from North Carolina knows, I have the right to come to the floor and seek recognition to speak about issues that are important to me. I would observe that no one in this Chamber is better on the issue of procedure on the Senate floor than the Senator from North Carolina. He knows that and I know that.

He also knows that, as a result of that, we are going to come to a time here in the matter of a couple of weeks in which the majority party is going to see this giant truck called reconciliation, with an empty box in the back, and they are going to throw everything in this reconciliation basket. They are going to throw Medicare, Medicaid, tax cuts, the farm bill, you name it, in that truck coming by. And what happens to folks on this side of the aisle?

The Senator from North Carolina knows what happens to us. We are limited in debate, limited in amendments. The fact is that we have a limited opportunity to get at these issues. That is what requires us to be here now and start talking about these issues, because we need that time to explore exactly what these policies are going to mean to this country.

I do not intend to prevent the Senator from having the floor. He has every right to seek the floor. He is

managing the bill. I understand his frustration.

Mr. HELMS. I am not frustrated.

Mr. DORGAN. I simply sought the floor because there are things I want to say in the next couple of weeks, and every opportunity I get, I am going to do that. I want to talk about choices and priorities in this country. You and I want the same thing for the future of this country. Many in this Chamber share a different view, not about the destination but about how you get there. These are things I want all Americans to understand, the choices that are being made, and what it will mean to them.

Let me close as I began today. I began today talking about the ceremony—a quite wonderful ceremony in the Chambers on the 50-year anniversary of the end of the Second World War. It is remarkable when you think of what people gave for this country. Many gave their lives. There was a spirit of unity and a spirit of national purpose in this country at that time.

I had hoped, somehow, for us again in this country to rekindle that spirit of unity and national purpose, to build a better country, address this country's problems, fix what is wrong, and move on to a better and brighter future.

I think you want that, I want that. Part of achieving that is for us to have a healthy, aggressive debate about a whole range of choices in terms of how you get there, what you do to make this a better country. That is all my purpose is. With that I yield the floor.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the distinguished Senator from Arkansas [Mr. PRYOR] be recognized for 15 minutes, at which time I regain 4 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NURSING HOME STANDARDS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I thank the Chair for recognizing me. I also thank my friend from North Carolina for making it possible under these parliamentary procedures to allow me to speak for a few moments about what I consider to be, Mr. President, one of the more critical issues that is before the U.S. Senate in the next coming weeks with regard to 2 million nursing home patients who live in thousands of nursing homes across America.

I do not know, Mr. President, if people are aware of what is happening, what has happened in the Senate Finance Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, what will be hap-

pening on the Senate and House floors with regard to the Federal standards which were established in 1987 in a bipartisan effort that protects residents of nursing homes from abuse and neglect.

Mr. President, what is happening to these standards is they are about to be abolished. They are about to be annihilated. Mr. President, there are about to be no Federal standards—no Federal standards to protect 2 million elderly and infirm individuals who live in America's nursing homes.

I think that we ought to look, Mr. President, for just a moment at these 2 million people who are now residents of America's nursing homes to see if these protective standards should actually be eliminated as proposed by the Republican majorities in the Senate Finance Committee and the Ways and Means Committee.

Back in 1987, as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, the Congress put into place a set of standards known as Nursing Home Reform. Senator George Mitchell actually led in that effort, and I am pleased to say that I played a very small part in drafting these important standards.

In fact, it was a bipartisan effort. Republicans and Democrats came together, because nursing home standards should not be political. Now, even though these standards have led to improved care in our Nation's nursing homes—we are about to consider a so-called Medicaid reform bill, Mr. President, which would totally wipe these standards out.

Two weeks ago in the Senate Finance Committee meeting I offered an amendment to restore these protections during a Finance Committee markup and debate on Medicaid and Medicare.

My amendment was defeated on an 10-10 vote because, according to the leadership of the committee, it is "contrary" to the philosophy of the reforms being proposed, and we don't want to sacrifice flexibility.

Mr. President, just for a moment, I will draw a picture. I will draw a picture, a composite if I might, of the people who are living in the nursing homes in America. First, there are 2 million citizens, elderly and young and middle aged. People who reside in the nursing homes today are of all ages. Most of them are over 60.

In 25 years, we will no longer have 2 million people in the nursing homes, Mr. President, we will have 3.6 million people in nursing homes. That is going to come about two decades from now and it will be here before we know it.

We also find in these nursing homes, 80 percent of the residents depend on Medicaid to help them pay for their care; 77 percent of this nursing home population need help with their daily dressing; 63 percent need help with toileting; 91 percent need help with bathing; 66 percent have a mental disorder, and one-half of these residents have no living relative to serve as their advocate.

Let me repeat that, Mr. President: One-half of the residents of nursing homes, or approximately 1 million of these individuals, have no living relative as their advocate to come to their rescue and to take their case to the nursing home administrator or to the inspectors who inspect the nursing homes. One-half of this nursing home population of our country who reach the age of 65 are going to require nursing home care.

That means that one-half of all the people in this Chamber, one-half of all the people in the galleries in this great Capitol of ours, when they reach the age of 65, half of these folks, including me—I assume if I am around here that long—are going to require nursing home care.

Mr. President, that is basically a composite of who we are looking at and who we are trying to protect by restoring the Federal nursing home standards.

I find it very hard to believe that any meaningful reform that we might propose would be inconsistent with quality care in nursing homes. The very essence of reform is to get rid of what does not work, keep what does work and to make the whole program better.

Mr. President, we are committing an enormous mistake, an enormous mistake in even considering the elimination of our quality standards. The very reason that we have these standards to begin with, let us go back, the very reason the Federal Government stepped in is because the States would not. The Federal Government had to protect these people in these nursing homes because the State regulations were inadequate.

Mr. President, I know that we in Congress are very hard at work examining every program to find ways in which to increase flexibility to the States. I am for flexibility. I am a former Governor. I believe in flexibility. I believe we ought to eliminate what we call big government at every opportunity we can, that we need to return more power to the States, local decisionmakers, and I think my record indicates that I have supported that with my vote.

Mr. President, I want to say, though, I have a very difficult time believing that when people in America think of big government, they are thinking of the laws that provide for the most basic and minimum standard of care for the most frail and the most vulnerable among us.

I want to pose a question that I will be posing when we actually get to the debate on reconciliation, and I am going to ask this question to my good friends and colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Now that we have finally, since 1987, finally come to the place in this country where we have just the bare minimum of standards to protect these 2 million individual residents of nursing homes, I would like to ask my colleagues, and I will pose this question at